

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A pressure muscle strength increasing apparatus comprising:
a tight fitting device including a belt having the length that is enough to be wrapped around a predetermined range of muscles of one of the limbs; fastening means for fastening said belt with said belt being wrapped around said predetermined range of muscles; and a gas bag provided in or on said belt, said gas bag being adapted to apply a predetermined compression force to said predetermined range of muscles by means of compressing said predetermined range of muscles when said gas bag is filled with gas while said belt that has been wrapped around said predetermined range of muscles is fastened by said fastening means;

pressure setting means that is capable of forcing a gas into said gas bag and removing the gas from said gas bag;

control means for controlling said pressure setting means in order to change said compression force; and

quantification means for quantifying, at a position closer to the distal end of a limb than said predetermined range of muscles, a quantification target that is associated with the state of blood flow that varies depending on said compression force;

said control means controlling said pressure setting means based on said quantification target,

wherein said quantification means is adapted to quantify said quantification target at a given time instant, and

said control means is adapted to control said pressure setting means over time based on the quantification target at that time instant,

further comprising recording means on which ideal data that is the data relating to an ideal quantification target is recorded, wherein the ideal data represents an association between

an elapsed time from the beginning of use of the pressure muscle strength increasing apparatus and the quantification target that is considered to be ideal at that time;

said control means being adapted to compare the quantification target at a given time instant with an ideal quantification target that is represented by the ideal data read out of said recording means, and to control said pressure setting means so that the control is performed to make the quantification target at that time instant be closer to said ideal quantification target by increasing or decreasing the pressure setting.

2-3. (Cancelled)

4. (Previously Presented) The pressure muscle strength increasing apparatus as claimed in Claim 1, wherein said pressure muscle strength increasing apparatus comprising of a plurality of tight fitting devices,

said quantification means are equal in number to said tight fitting devices, each being associated with each of said tight fitting devices to quantify said quantification target on the limb which its corresponding tight fitting device is wrapped around on the distal side thereof,

said pressure setting means are equal in number to said tight fitting devices, each being associated with each of said tight fitting devices,

said control means being adapted to individually control said pressure setting means associated with the tight fitting devices that are associated with said quantification means on which the quantification targets are determined, based on each of said quantification targets.

5. (Previously Presented) The pressure muscle strength increasing apparatus as claimed in Claim 1, wherein said quantification target is at least one of Korotkoff sounds, Swan sounds, and pulse waves.

6. (Previously Presented) The pressure muscle strength increasing apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein said control means is adapted to control said pressure setting means to remove

the gas from said gas bag when said quantification target at that time instant falls into at least one of the following 1) to 3):

1) when the heart rate at that time instant is indicated to exceed a predetermined heart rate;

2) when the blood pressure at that time instant is indicated to become lower than a predetermined blood pressure; and

3) when pulsation at that time instant is indicated to be abnormal.

7. (Currently Amended) A control device for a pressure muscle strength increasing apparatus that is used in combination with:

a tight fitting device including a belt having the length that is enough to be wrapped around a predetermined range of muscles of one of the limbs, fastening means for fastening said belt with said belt being wrapped around said predetermined range of muscles, a gas bag provided in or on said belt, said gas bag being adapted to apply a predetermined compression force to said predetermined range of muscles by means of compressing said predetermined range of muscles when said gas bag is filled with gas while said belt that has been wrapped around said predetermined range of muscles is fastened by said fastening means;

a pressure setting segment that is capable of forcing a gas into said gas bag and removing the gas from said gas bag; and

a quantification segment for quantifying, at a position closer to the distal end of a limb than said predetermined range of muscles, a quantification target that is associated with the state of blood flow that varies depending on said compression force;

said control device comprising:

receiving means that receives quantification target data, which is the data about the quantification target, from each of said quantification segments;

control data generating means for generating control data and controlling said pressure setting segment to change said compression force based on the quantification target data that have been received; and

sending means for sending said control data to said pressure setting segment,

wherein said quantification segment is adapted to quantify said quantification target at a given time instant, and

said control device is adapted to control said pressure setting means over time based on the quantification target at that time instant,

further comprising recording means on which ideal data that is the data relating to an ideal quantification target is recorded, wherein the ideal data represents an association between an elapsed time from the beginning of use of the pressure muscle strength increasing apparatus and the quantification target that is considered to be ideal at that time;

said control device being adapted to compare the quantification target at a given time instant with an ideal quantification target that is represented by the ideal data read out of said recording means, and to control said pressure setting means so that the control is performed to make the quantification target at that time instant be closer to said ideal quantification target by increasing or decreasing the pressure setting.

8-9. (Cancelled)

10. (Currently Amended) The control device for a pressure muscle strength increasing apparatus as claimed in Claim 7, wherein the control device is used in combination with a plurality of tight fitting devices,

when said quantification segments are equal in number to said tight fitting devices, each being associated with each of said tight fitting devices to quantify said quantification target on the limb which its corresponding tight fitting device is wrapped around on the distal side thereof,

when said pressure setting segments are equal in number to said tight fitting devices, each being associated with each of said tight fitting devices,

said receiving means being adapted to receive said quantification target data over time from each of said quantification segments,

said control data generating means being adapted to individually control said pressure setting segments associated with the tight fitting devices that are associated with said

quantification segments on which the quantification targets are determined, based on each of said quantification target data.

11. (Currently Amended) The control device for a pressure muscle strength increasing apparatus as claimed in Claim 7, wherein said quantification target is at least one of Korotkoff sounds, Swan sounds, and pulse waves.

12. (Currently Amended) The control device for a pressure muscle strength increasing apparatus as claimed in Claim 7, wherein said control data generating means is adapted to generate control data for use in controlling said pressure setting segment to remove the gas from said gas bag when said quantification target at that time instant falls into at least one of the following 1) to 3):

- 1) when the heart rate at that time instant is indicated to exceed a predetermined heart rate;
- 2) when the blood pressure at that time instant is indicated to become lower than a predetermined blood pressure; and
- 3) when pulsation at that time instant is indicated to be abnormal.

13. (Currently Amended) A method that is carried out in a control device for a pressure muscle strength increasing apparatus that is used in combination with:

a tight fitting device including a belt having the length that is enough to be wrapped around a predetermined range of muscles of one of the limbs, fastening means for fastening said belt with said belt being wrapped around said predetermined range of muscles, a gas bag provided in or on said belt, said gas bag being adapted to apply a predetermined compression force to said predetermined range of muscles by means of compressing said predetermined range of muscles when said gas bag is filled with gas while said belt that has been wrapped around said predetermined range of muscles is fastened by said fastening means;

a pressure setting segment that is capable of forcing a gas into said gas bag and removing the gas from said gas bag; and

a quantification segment for quantifying, at a position closer to the distal end of a limb than said predetermined range of muscles, a quantification target that is associated with the state of blood flow that varies depending on said compression force;

said method comprising:

a step for receiving quantification target data, which is the data about the quantification target, from said quantification segment;

a step for generating control data for use in controlling said pressure setting segment to change said compression force based on the quantification target data that have been received; and

a step for sending said control data to said pressure setting segment,

a step for controlling said pressure setting means over time based on the quantification target at that time instant,

a step for recording data relating to an ideal quantification target;

a step for comparing the quantification target at a given time instant with an ideal quantification target that is represented by the recorded data relating to an ideal quantification target, wherein the ideal quantification target represents an association between an elapsed time from the beginning of use of the pressure muscle strength increasing apparatus and the quantification target that is considered to be ideal at that time; and

a step for controlling said pressure setting means to make the quantification target at that time instant be closer to said ideal quantification target by increasing or decreasing the pressure setting,

wherein said quantification segment is adapted to quantify said quantification target at a given time instant.

14. (Currently Amended) A pressure muscle strength increasing apparatus comprising:
a tight fitting device which is intended to encircle a predetermined range of muscles of one of the limbs, is intended to apply a predetermined compression force to said predetermined

range of muscles by means of compressing said predetermined range of muscles, and is designed so that said compression force can be varied;

pressure setting means for use in controlling the compression force provided by said tight fitting device;

control means for controlling said pressure setting means in order to change said compression force; and

quantification means for quantifying, at a position closer to the distal end of a limb than said predetermined range of muscles, a quantification target that is associated with the state of blood flow that varies depending on said compression force;

said control means controlling said pressure setting means based on said quantification target,

wherein said quantification means is adapted to quantify said quantification target at a given time instant, and

said control means is adapted to control said pressure setting means over time based on the quantification target at that time instant,

further comprising recording means on which ideal data that is the data relating to an ideal quantification target is recorded, wherein the ideal data represents an association between an elapsed time from the beginning of use of the pressure muscle strength increasing apparatus and the quantification target that is considered to be ideal at that time;

said control means being adapted to compare the quantification target at a given time instant with an ideal quantification target that is represented by the ideal data read out of said recording means, and to control said pressure setting means so that the control is performed to make the quantification target at that time instant be closer to said ideal quantification target by increasing or decreasing the pressure setting.

15. (Currently Amended) A control device for a pressure muscle strength increasing apparatus that is used in combination with:

a tight fitting device which is intended to encircle a predetermined range of muscles of one of the limbs, is intended to apply a predetermined compression force to said predetermined

range of muscles by means of compressing said predetermined range of muscles, and is designed so that said compression force can be varied;

a pressure setting segment for use in controlling the compression force provided by said tight fitting device; and

a quantification segment for quantifying, at a position closer to the distal end of a limb than said predetermined range of muscles, a quantification target that is associated with the state of blood flow that varies depending on said compression force;

said control segment comprising:

receiving means that receives quantification target data, which is the data about the quantification target, from said quantification segment;

control data generating means for generating control data and controlling said pressure setting segment to change said compression force based on the quantification target data that have been received; and

sending means for sending said control data to said pressure setting segment,

wherein said quantification segment is adapted to quantify said quantification target at a given time instant, and

said control segment is adapted to control said pressure setting means over time based on the quantification target at that time instant,

further comprising recording means on which ideal data that is the data relating to an ideal quantification target is recorded, wherein the ideal data represents an association between an elapsed time from the beginning of use of the pressure muscle strength increasing apparatus and the quantification target that is considered to be ideal at that time;

said control segment being adapted to compare the quantification target at a given time instant with an ideal quantification target that is represented by the ideal data read out of said recording means, and to control said pressure setting means so that the control is performed to make the quantification target at that time instant be closer to said ideal quantification target by increasing or decreasing the pressure setting.

16. (Currently Amended) A method that is carried out in a control device for a pressure muscle strength increasing apparatus that is used in combination with:

a tight fitting device which is intended to encircle a predetermined range of muscles of one of the limbs, is intended to apply a predetermined compression force to said predetermined range of muscles by means of compressing said predetermined range of muscles, and is designed so that said compression force can be varied;

a pressure setting segment for use in controlling the compression force provided by said tight fitting device; and

a quantification segment for quantifying, at a position closer to the distal end of a limb than said predetermined range of muscles, a quantification target that is associated with the state of blood flow that varies depending on said compression force;

said method comprising:

a step for receiving quantification target data, which is the data about the quantification target, from said quantification segment;

a step for generating control data for use in controlling said pressure setting segment to change said compression force based on the quantification target data that have been received; and

a step for sending said control data to said pressure setting segment,

a step for quantifying said quantification target at a given time instant, and

a step for controlling said pressure setting means over time based on the quantification target at that time instant,

a step for recording the data relating to an ideal quantification target;

a step for comparing the quantification target at a given time instant with an ideal quantification target that is represented by the ideal data read out of said recording means, wherein the ideal data represents an association between an elapsed time from the beginning of use of the pressure muscle strength increasing apparatus and the quantification target that is considered to be ideal at that time;

and a step for controlling said pressure setting means so that the control is performed to make the quantification target at that time instant be closer to said ideal quantification target by increasing or decreasing the pressure setting.

17. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein said quantification target is one of Korotkoff sounds and Swan sounds.

18. (Currently Amended) The control device for a pressure muscle strength increasing apparatus of claim 7, wherein said quantification target is one of Korotkoff sounds and Swan sounds.

19. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 14, wherein said quantification target is one of Korotkoff sounds and Swan sounds.

20. (Currently Amended) The control device for a pressure muscle strength increasing apparatus of claim 15, wherein said quantification target is one of Korotkoff sounds and Swan sounds.